Remarks/Arguments

In the Specification:

The Abstract has been amended to correct minor editorial problems that were pointed out in the Office action. Paragraph [0089] has been amended to correct minor editorial problems, such as confusion between the letter "D" and symbol "Δ."

Errors in Rejection:

The assignee respectfully asserts that:

It was erroneous to reject Claims 1-9, under 35 U.S.C. 102, as being anticipated by Greif, US Pat. No. 5,371,675. A prima facie case of anticipation has not been established.

Argument regarding 35 U.S.C. 102 and lack of a prima facie case of anticipation:

As stated in MPEP 2131, to anticipate a claim, a reference must teach every element of the claim. The following arguments point out some limitations in the rejected claims which are not described in the reference relied upon (Greif). Thus a prima facie case of anticipation has not been established.

Limitations in the rejected claims which are not described in the reference relied upon in the rejection.

Here are two examples found in Claim 1:

"defining for each option a boolean variable with a first value and a second value,

preferably a "true" or "false" value;

... associating a logical or mathematical operation with each boolean variable ...."

Concerning "defining for each option a boolean variable," consider an example from the specification of the subject patent application (Page 15, or Paragraph 56 of the published version).

> An option is defined as a boolean variable, which can be set as "True" or "False" and which may impact the content of any given cell within an electronic spreadsheet .... For instance the formula "$baseprice *(1-10%*$discount)" refers ... to a named range "discount" which is also defined as an option according to the present invention. In this example, ... when the option "discount" is "true" (with option value "true" conventionally set to 1), the formula results in a value equal to the value of the named range "baseprice", decreased by 10%.

Nothing like this is found in the reference the Office action relies on. On the contrary, Greif teaches away from a solution involving "a boolean variable with a first value and a second value." Teaching away is the antithesis of suggesting the claimed subject matter. Grief teaches away, by describing a *"plurality* [two or more] of alternatives as the source of the data that is used"* in the spreadsheet." Greif, Column 2 (emphasis added). Grief teaches away, by showing an example including three alternatives rather than two:

"Medium Rates--Alternative 1

Medium Rates--Alternative 2

Medium Rates--Alternative 3," and by stating: "There is *no restriction on the number*

of range alternatives that can exist (except memory limitations)." Greif, Column 5 (emphasis added). Again, in Greif, FIG. 5, the item "promotion" has three alternatives rather than two. Apparently any of the three alternatives could be included in a scenario in Greif, FIG. 10. All this material in Greif leads away from the rejected claim's "boolean variable with a first value and a second value, preferably a "true" or "false" value."

Greif uses the word "boolean" only once in 40 columns of text, mentioning a kind of function that "*returns* a boolean *value*" (Greif Column 29, line 54, emphasis added). This clearly is not a description of "defining for each option a boolean variable."

Also consider "associating a logical or mathematical operation with each boolean variable," and the discount example given above, from the subject patent application. Nothing like this is found in the reference the Office action relies on. Again, Grief teaches away, by stating: "The concept of the alternative is the core feature" (Greif, Column 5), and by describing alternatives as "the source of the *data* that is used" in the spreadsheet (Greif, Column 2, emphasis added), not *operations* on data. Greif, FIG. 5, uses a border to highlight an alternative data set, not *operations* on data. This material in Greif leads away from the rejected claim's "associating a logical or mathematical operation with each boolean variable."
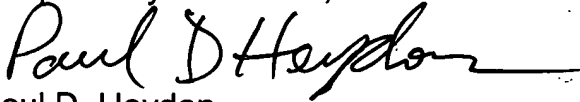
Rejected Claims 2-9 are not separately argued.

The points made above, concerning Claim 1, also apply to Claims 2-9, which depend upon Claim 1. Thus a prima facie case of anticipation has not been established.

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Reply to Office action of June 3, 2004

Assignee respectfully submits that the rejection of Claims 1-9 should be withdrawn, and requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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